

Elliott House
269 High Street
Petersburg
Virginia

HABS NO. VA-662

HABS
VA
27-PET,
34-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ELLIOTT HOUSE

HABS
VA
27-PET
34

Location: 269 High Street, Petersburg, Virginia

Present Owner
and Occupant: Mrs. Oliva Fittz Gibson

Present Use: Private residence

Statement of
Significance: This fine clapboard Victorian house, built c. 1876, is noteworthy on the exterior for its mansard roof, cast iron roof decoration, and carved porch trim. On the interior, the inlaid marble mantels, newel, stair balusters, and heavy paneled doors are of interest.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1876 (Landbook 1875 and 1876, Hand-written bound manuscripts in the Clerk's Office of Hustings Court, Petersburg, Virginia).
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Complete chain of title for the building follows. Deed Books and Will are in the Clerk's Office of Hustings Court at Petersburg.

1875 Deed November 26, 1875 recorded in
Book 38 page 142
Charles F. Collier
tr. T. C. Elliott & wife (Isabella F.)
George W. Manson
Annie E. Manson
Mary A. Elliott
to
Charles F. Collier
ad. J. W. Elliott
tr. Isabella F. Elliott & children

1890 Deed June 12, 1890 recorded in
Book 53 page 57
Charles F. Collier
ad. J. W. Elliott
tr. Isabella F. Elliott
H. H. Elliott & wife Rosa
to
Ella S. Romaine

- 1900 Deed December 31, 1900 recorded in
Book 62 page 582
Ella L. (Romaine) Stratton
H. P. Stratton
to
George A. Fittz
- 1914 Deed December 5, 1914 recorded in
Book 84 page 561
George A. Fittz
Annie L. Fittz
to
George A. Fittz, Jr.
- 1916 Deed September 11, 1916 recorded in
Book 88 page 415
George A. Fittz, Jr.
to
Annie L. Fittz
- 1947 Deed July 23, 1947 recorded in
Will Book 23 page 571
Annie L. Fittz d. 5/13/1959
to
Oliva Fittz Gibson

4. Original plans and construction: None known.
5. Alterations and additions: The rear porch was probably added c. 1889 (Landbook 1889).

Prepared by Randall J. Biallas
University of Illinois, Urbana
August 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A Victorian house of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Noteworthy for its shape and, interestingly enough, its color--yellow. The cast iron roof cresting and handsomely detailed interior wood-work are other notable features.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Basically rectangular with projecting five-sided angular portion in front. Two stories plus an

attic and a basement. Two projecting wings on rear were probably added before the turn of the century.

2. Foundations: Brick.
3. Wall construction: Basement, brick. All other floors are of heavy timber construction, weatherboard siding, painted yellow. This color, as mentioned earlier, gives the house a charm and appeal it might not otherwise have.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are three exterior openings: one at basement, rear; one at first floor, rear; and one at front entrance. The front entrance is a double doorway with glass panels on the top half of each door. A glass arched transom is above. The front of the house projects out to the right of the entry and in addition the entrance is set back 4' into the hallway, thus giving a strong sense of arrival.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Basement windows are double hung, 6 lights each sash. The first floor front windows are high double hung with one (1) light per sash with flat scrolled trim flared at the top of each window. Second floor windows have one-over-one sash and are also flared at the top. Trim on the second floor windows is arched at the top. Windows in the rear wing are six-over-six, double hung.
6. Porches: Small porch, with steps, leads to front entry (first floor is about 3' above grade). Above doorway and projecting out over the porch is a cantilevered roof, held up by large ornate brackets on each side. Around the periphery of the porch roof is ornate ironwork cresting. At rear, porch projects out from original building at first floor, above and to side is addition with supporting columns for portion above. Porch is supported below by pipe columns. (Addition does not extend out at basement level).
7. Structural system: Heavy timber wall construction, attic and roof framing 2" x 4" wall studs, 2" x 10" joists.
8. Roof shape and covering: Mansard roof forms attic space. Above 8' high and sloping inward. Covering on sides of mansard is slate. Covering on top inaccessible, unknown. Flat on top.
9. Dormers: Five (5) dormers, two in front, one each side, and one on rear, arched, one-over-one sash.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Basement, basically two rooms and hallway, was at one time the kitchen. First floor, hallway along west wall with two rooms opening off hall to right. Two very small rooms at rear, additions. Both large first floor rooms have fireplaces. Second floor, three rooms and hallway, two along side and one at front. Two side rooms have fireplaces. Attic, one large open space.
2. Stairway: One stairway serves entire building. One landing between floors except to basement; stairs to basement have no landing. First and second floor newels, balusters, and stair rail are all handsomely carved. Stairwell open first floor to attic.
3. Flooring: Wood, except for basement, which is concrete. Basement floor was formerly wood, but was covered when it began to decay.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Basement, painted plaster walls and ceilings primarily, two or three walls exposed brick. First floor walls, paper over plaster, ceilings plaster. Second floor is, for most part, the same. Attic is all exposed structure except for one drywall partition along stairs, which has been added.
5. Doorways and doors: Significant on the first floor is the large sliding double door, which connects the two main rooms. The dark paneled wood doors have a beautiful finish. At the top, just below the lintel, is a decorative transom with spindles extending the length of the lintel. The second floor doors all have 3 paneled glass transoms.
6. Details and trim: The newel post in the front hall bears further mention; the major portion is four-sided, and slants inward slightly. This is capped by two carved knobs, one large one, and a smaller one above that. The wood color is a rich dark brown.
7. Notable hardware: There are two dismantled decorative iron hearths and grates in the attic.
8. Lighting: Modern. However, there is one hanging fixture in the hall, which is original, and was formerly a gas-burning fixture.
9. Heating: Gas heating. Formerly heating was with Latrobe heaters set in fireplaces on first floor. These burned wood and coal and heat was dissipated into rooms. Heat was carried to second floor through flues and there discharged into rooms through wall registers.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building faces south on High Street in a residential area. It is set back approximately 20' front street to front of house; then beyond that drops sharply. There is a retaining wall on each side of house and grade is 5' below at lower level. Ground then drops gradually to rear of lot (about 30' from house) and then drops sharply again down to Low Street. Basement is fully exposed at lower level.
2. Landscaping and walks: Decorative iron fence along front concrete sidewalk; brick walk leads to front entrance. Small shrubs planted around house--no high trees.

Prepared by John M. McRae
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
August 1968

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records are part of the documentation made during the 1968 Petersburg Summer Project, undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with The Historic Petersburg Foundation, Inc., with financial assistance from The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. During the summer, records were made of twenty-two buildings in the city.

The project was under the general direction of James C. Massey, Chief. Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor was John M. McRae of the University of Florida. The recording team was composed of Randall J. Biallas, Historian (University of Illinois, Urbana), and student assistant architects Michael Hamilton (University of Arizona), Thomas J. Sanford (Washington State University), and Edwin S. Smith, Jr. (Rhode Island School of Design). Photographs were made by George Eisenman.